



NEWS

R E L E A S E

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HUDGENS URGES CAUTION WITH HOLIDAY COOKING

Atlanta – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens urges Georgians to use caution with holiday cooking, and when they heat up leftovers on the stove after the holidays.

“We’ve had 9 fatalities in Georgia so far this year in which the cause of the fire was cooking-related,” Hudgens said. “Over the years we have seen many fires caused by a stove that has been accidentally left on.”

Hudgens suggested the following tips for cooking safety:

- Always set a timer when cooking, so you never forget to turn off the burners or oven.
- If a pan catches fire, cover it with a lid immediately and turn off the burner. Don’t attempt to fight a grease fire with water, as it may make the fire worse. For an oven fire turn off the heat and keep the door closed.
- Wear tight-fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can contact a burner and ignite. If this happens, remember “stop, drop and roll.” Stop where you are, drop to the ground, and roll over to smother the flames with your hands by your side if your sleeve is on fire.
- Never use a cooking stove to heat your home.
- Install an adequate number of smoke alarms. Most fatal fires start between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m., while the family is asleep. The advance warning of a smoke alarm may mean the difference between life and death. Nine out of ten fire victims are already dead before the fire department is even called, mainly from smoke and toxic gases.
- Each household should have a well-rehearsed family escape plan. All rooms, especially bedrooms, should have two escape routes. Have a predetermined meeting place outside the house to ensure everyone is out safely.
- Have a fire extinguisher readily available and be familiar with the instruction on how to use it before it may be needed. An ordinary dry chemical extinguisher is usually safe for both grease and electrical fires. If a small fire is caught in time, you may be able to quickly put it out but, be sure others are getting out and you too have a clear way out.
- If the fire is too large for an extinguisher, get out of the house and stay out. Do not go back inside. Call the fire department from a neighbor’s house and then go to your family meeting place.

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